

City Council Minutes

August 25, 2003

The Council of the City of Milton-Freewater met in regular session on Monday, August 25, 2003 at 7:00 p.m. in the council chambers of City Hall.

The following members were present: Mayor Key, Councilors Saager, Lyon, Humbert, Woods, Records and Kelley. Staff members present were City Manager Delphine Palmer, Assistant City Manager Linda Hall, Public Works Superintendent Howard Moss, Police Chief Mike Gallaher, Fire Chief Sam Hubbard, Finance Director Dave Richmond, Electric Assistant Leanne Burris and Administrative Assistant Teresa Dutcher. Citizens present were Wanda Saager, Rick Saager, Michelle Saager, Norm Saager, Donna Saager, Renae Saager, Randy Saager, Deidra Saager, Loren Harvey, Ona Harwood, Steve Story, Brian Steadman and Faron Reynolds. Youth Representative Ben Colahan has resigned to go to college and study physics. Mr. Colahan was given a plaque of recognition for his service on the council prior to his leaving.

Members of the press present were Jeff Durham of the Blue Mountain Pioneer, Susan Brooks of the East Oregonian, Jessica Delos Reyes of the Walla Walla Union Bulletin and Dennis Widmer of the Valley Herald.

PRESENTATION and PROCLAMATION delivered by Mayor Key honoring Councilor Herb Saager for over fifty years of service to the city as councilor, council president and volunteer firefighter, and also many various community organizations. Mayor Key proclaimed August 25th of every year to be "Herb Saager Appreciation Day". Assistant City Manager Linda Hall addressed council and citizens stating that sometimes it takes an outside perspective to point out a jewel or blessing you have beside you everyday. After City Manager Delphine Palmer had a chance to work with Herb Saager a few months, she asked if anyone had ever done anything to honor him. Ms. Hall said that had not happened, that she had just appreciated and loved him everyday. Ms. Hall recognized Ms. Palmer as the "brainchild" of this event and said it was long overdue and then spoke directly to Councilor Saager saying "we are very blessed and thrilled to work with you, and my hat is off to you." Councilor Kelley presented a plaque of gratitude for Mr. Saager's service for over fifty years on council and work as a firefighter.

Councilor Records said that if his math was correct, Mr. Saager joined the ranks as firefighter 56 years ago and if that was right, the fire department was known as the Freewater Fire Station, which is now known as the North Station. Councilor Saager concurred. Councilor Records moved to rename the North Fire Station as the Herb Saager Fire Station. Councilor Humbert seconded the motion which passed unanimously with Councilor Saager abstaining.

Assistant City Manager Linda Hall shared with council and citizens a photocopy of the sign which will be done soon, and that his firefighter co-workers will be erecting the sign in honor of Herb Saager.

Councilor Saager thanked everyone and then was given a standing ovation by members of the council and citizens as well.

Councilor Saager stood and stated he had a lot of family here this evening and he wanted to thank them for their help, especially during his absence, and expressed they were all great people themselves.

City Manager Delphine Palmer said to Councilor Herb Saager, "Happy Birthday!" and then cut the cake.

Council took a brief recess to celebrate Councilor Herb Saager.

CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS: Items on the consent calendar included minutes from the July 28, 2003 meeting. Councilor Kelley moved to adopt the Consent Calendar and Councilor Records seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Mayor Key announced this was the opportunity for citizens to approach the council with items not on the agenda. None approached.

NEW BUSINESS

BID AWARD CONTRACT 177 NEW BUCKET TRUCK. Public Works Superintendent Howard Moss said the city had a bucket truck that was nearing the end of its life of service when an accident took place which rendered the truck disabled. Evaluations determined it was the same amount of money to acquire a new truck as it was to repair the old. All three companies that submitted bids were within specifications. Staff recommends to award the bid to Pacific Utility Equipment company of Tigard, Oregon in the amount of \$102,150.00. There is a 150-day delivery on this unit.

Councilor Woods asked if all delivery times were about the same. Mr. Moss said they were real close. The vehicle is to be delivered FOB Milton-Freewater, Oregon. Councilor Woods asked what would happen if they went over the 150-270 days. Mr. Moss said there was a penalty of \$50.00 daily.

Councilor Saager moved to award bid to Pacific Utility Equipment Company in Tigard, Oregon in the amount of \$102,150.00. Councilor Kelley seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

BID AWARD CONTRACT 178 NEW GREENS MOWER. Public Works Superintendent Howard Moss stated the existing greens mower was depreciated on a 10-year cycle and is now in its 11th year. The specifications were such that we provided the basic greens mower unit along with some thatching and spiking reels. Staff recommends to award the greens mower to Western Equipment & Irrigation in the total amount of \$29,961.26.

Councilor Saager asked if this was a brand-name unit. Mr. Moss said it was--that it was a Toro. Mr. Moss said that Toro and John Deere were the leading manufacturers of greens mowers.

Councilor Lyon moved to award the bid to Western Equipment & Irrigation in the amount of \$29,961.26. Councilor Humbert seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

BID AWARD CONTRACT 179 NEW POLICE SEDAN. Public Works Superintendent Howard Moss said the police department was desirous of a new vehicle for what is believed to be solid reasoning. It is in the budget this year with some change in specifications. We have several Ford Crown Victoria, which is the most popular police sedan in the United States of America, but it has had some problems with recalls and warranty issues. We have allowed the specifications to include front-wheel drive vehicles. The apparent low bid was with Power Chevrolet of Sublimity, Oregon, but after evaluating the bids, it was discovered that Power Chevrolet took exception to the wheel cover requirement and provided hubcaps instead and then also did not notarize the required Non-Collusion Affidavit. Mr. Moss asked his staff to independently evaluate the difference in the two components and found that Sallee Chevrolet was lower by \$62.00 overall. The recommendation was reviewed with City Attorney Doug Hojem and he concurred to recommend the bid award to Sallee Chevrolet in the amount of \$18,863.00.

Councilor Saager asked about the cost to re-train our officers to drive front-wheel drive cars? Police Chief Mike Gallaher stated this vehicle would be a first-line vehicle at some point, but it will initially be assigned to the sergeant for call-outs 24/7. Chief Gallaher further stated that the training for rear-wheel drive vehicles versus the training for front-wheel drive vehicles is very comparable and police driving instructors do not have any concerns.

Councilor Woods asked if Finance Director Dave Richmond would do a cumulative loan or a loan on each vehicle. Mr. Richmond said he would put it out to bid to local banks and that basically, the bucket truck would be the collateral. Mr. Richmond anticipates a loan at approximately 4% interest rate. Councilor Humbert asked if Chevrolet offered a 0% rate and suggested it would be worth a try.

Councilor Saager moved on Mr. Moss' recommendation to award the bid to Sallee Chevrolet in the amount of \$18,863.00. Councilor Kelley seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

MANAGER'S REPORT

City Manager Delphine Palmer said that previously there had been discussion about Verizon installing a cell-tower. Verizon first wanted the tower on our water tank and then it was determined it was not a good place. Verizon was looking at several potential locations. Verizon said they would have a demonstration, invite the public, and release a weather balloon at the same time. Verizon did this on a Saturday without public notification. As in other cities, if Verizon does not find a location on city property, they will offer this opportunity to private individuals, renting a portion of private property for approximately \$500.00 monthly. The question is—what citizen would not accept this offer? The problem—towers all over the city without any input from governing bodies. What other cities are doing to solve this problem is establishing policy. Ms. Palmer asked council if they wanted her to pursue the research. Councilor Kelley said she thought this was a good idea. Councilor Woods thought perhaps the FCC had some regulations regarding cell-towers and also asked if the policies included radio operators and their equipment, or if it were towers in general. Ms. Palmer thought the policies involved towers in general.

Ms. Palmer stated that as council knew, the substation renovation cost, when it went out to bid, came back exceeding budgeted funds. Now we are all real excited about the Public Works department working together with the Electric department to do this much needed work. Ms. Palmer said she felt it was a real opportunity to learn both from the work as well as developing a team effort. This project has already begun and Ms Palmer wanted to let citizens know that since this is such a major project, some things will not be done as quickly as before, but they will be done, and asked our citizens to be patient.

Ms. Palmer said the city was receiving a lot of requests for use of the Albee Room in the new library and she has some concerns as some organizations desire to book the room quite regularly, which is what we wanted to discourage because we have the Community Building for that kind of use. This can become a potential problem where the city cannot have access to the rooms because they are regularly scheduled for use by other organizations. Ms. Palmer said this happened where she had come from in Newport, Washington. Some of the local banks have built conference rooms and initially rented them out, but after careful consideration of how the rooms were treated and left, the rooms are no longer available to other organizations. One thought, was if the council is desirous at all to use the Albee Room for council meetings, we would need to act soon or we may not have the opportunity. Ms. Palmer said she did not want the room used for all kinds of groups or parties. Councilor Saager asked if council used the Albee room, that the room would not be rented for other use. Ms. Palmer said it would be rented for other use, but that council would have priority and would not lend itself to so many meetings that are held there. We are telling people that the Community Building is specifically for public use. The Albee room should be limited to library meetings and other city related uses. Councilor Saager said he would like an opportunity to view the Albee room and asked Ms. Palmer to submit to council the cost to set up this room for council.

The Police department has been doing some emphasis patrols for speeding and have been working on the Elizabeth Street area. Ms. Palmer said she had worked with Chief Gallaher getting the police dummy in a police vehicle and will get this done as soon as they obtain a head for the dummy.

Mike Watkins and Councilor Woods just returned from an economic summit meeting last Thursday and Friday, and Mr. Watkins happened to have his new city business cards with the new logo that he was handing out. The response was very positive, and many said, "WOW-- That's fantastic!" These responses were from economic development personnel and other council members.

The Milton Ditch situation is really complicated and there are some changes coming and we all need to know exactly how this may impact our citizens. Ms. Palmer asked Public Works Superintendent Howard Moss to plan an informational meeting for all of us that he can tell us the history of Milton Ditch and how it will affect a number of issues here.

COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilor Saager said he thought he was granted a terrific honor this evening, and said he was truly grateful. He further said that it sounded like an obituary, and he wanted all of us to know

that he intended to be here for some time to come. Councilor Saager thanked Ms. Palmer, Ms. Hall, Ms. Dutcher, Mr. Moss and all the staff that worked on this, and said he had never been so thrilled in his whole life.

Also, Councilor Saager said he never heard anyone say anything about the frog. He said it was fabulous! (The frog light on the water tower that Mr. Moss and his crew made).

Councilor Kelley told Councilor Saager that she felt many would agree with her, that we wanted to honor you while you were living so you could enjoy how we feel.

Councilor Kelley also updated council on the after school programming through Healthy Communities, Healthy Youth. The fall session is beginning the week of September 10, 2003. The summer session was extremely successful with a higher percentage of youth and activities than ever. The program was enlarged by combining the program with Central School and the 21st Century grant they received resulting in more hours of programming. They will be having a street dance on North Main Street on September 6th. The Youth Action Council is sponsoring this event with Power 99 providing the D.J. for this event. This is for high school kids only.

Council adjourned to executive session at 7:50 p.m.

Council reconvened at 8:12 p.m. for action.

Councilor Kelley moved to ratify the new contract between the City and Golf Professional George Gillette as presented by City Manager Delphine Palmer. Councilor Humbert seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Councilor Humbert commented that the City was fortunate to have someone as dedicated as Mr. Gillette who worked many long hours at the Golf Course to see that things ran smoothly.

Councilor Saager stated he agreed, but also wished to recognize and thank the Public Works employees who worked on the Golf Course. He stated he was very impressed with their dedication and enthusiasm in keeping the Course looking excellent. He added it was not unusual to see these employees headed out for mowing and trimming the Course as early as 5:00 a.m.

There being no further Council business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:31 p.m.

Lewis S. Key, Mayor